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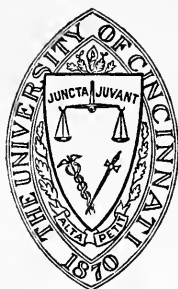
MAN IN THE DEMOCRACY





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*His Educational Rights,
Duties and Destiny.*



INAUGURAL ADDRESS

As President of the University of Cincinnati, by

CHARLES W. DABNEY

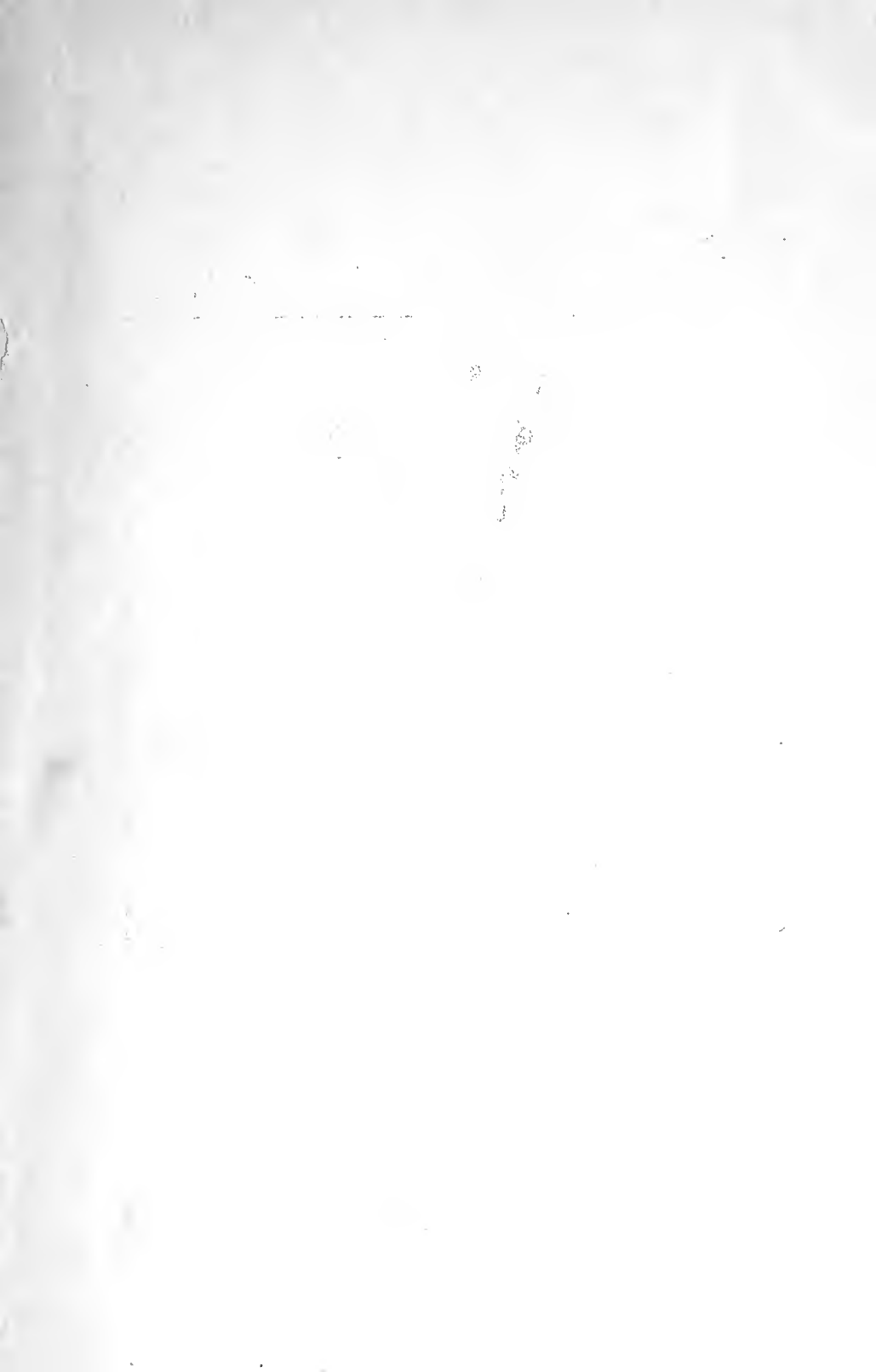
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MAN IN THE DEMOCRACY.

*Governor Herrick, Mayor Fleischmann, Mr. Chairman
and Gentlemen of the Board of Directors; Delegates
of Sister Institutions and Guests; Colleagues of the
Faculties; Alumni and Students of the University;
Ladies and Gentlemen of Cincinnati:*

These generous greetings compel me to pause a moment to attempt to express, if possible, the feeling they evoke. For your kindly welcome, for your words of encouragement, and for your assurance of cooperation, I am profoundly grateful. To make suitable response is beyond my power. Your kind utterances make me very humble now, but they will inspire me and give me strength in the future. To justify your faith and realize your hope will tax my capacity to the uttermost; but, relying upon the sympathy and support of the Directors, of the Faculties, of the Alumni, and of the people of Cincinnati, I shall endeavor faithfully to execute this office, trusting you to judge the work as generously as you have welcomed the worker.

I stand here to-day, however, merely as a representative of the ideals and aspirations of education of the people of Cincinnati, and as the chosen head of the institution with which they propose to crown the life of their city. A system of public schools,

ascending grade by grade from the primaries to the colleges, and a justly celebrated collection of private schools, professional colleges, and schools of music and art, demand a university as the capstone of the educational pyramid. Having opened her rivers and railways to commerce, founded her marts of trade, and built her halls of industry, Cincinnati has now established on the heights her Acropolis of culture, and will erect thereon her temples of learning, science, and art.

From a small town of a section Cincinnati has grown to be a great city of the nation. The half million people who earn their living within sight of these hills will soon be a million. To all of these and to those other millions dwelling in our tributary country, the city owes a duty of direction and leadership. Nothing develops a people like education; nothing refines a people like art; nothing exalts a people but righteousness: and these are the ends for which the University exists.

Education is the most serious problem of the democracy. The American people have fully resolved to give all their children an elementary education. That much is settled for good. But shall the people of a republic depend entirely upon private individuals, associations, and churches for the means of higher education? Our states have said, "No." They have built their universities, which are already the most characteristic institutions and powerful agents of the democracy. How a great city shall organize and support a university of its own is the problem before us.

Cincinnati is the first of American cities to undertake to solve this problem. As the result of the generous provisions of her private citizens and of the public contributions of the people, she has already come into possession of a large educational plant. This union of public and private effort in the support of a noble cause is typical of her honorable past and prophetic of her splendid future. It forms the most interesting educational experiment now being made in the country, if not in the world. A municipal system of education,

complete from the elementary schools to the graduate and professional departments, a great unit of democracy at work educating itself—what could be more important? The practical solution of this problem will be interesting to every large democratic community. Yours, fellow citizens, is the opportunity to serve not only your own children and those of your neighbor, but our entire country and the whole educational world.

This great undertaking calls for our united, our devoted support. The noble manner in which private citizens and the city have cooperated in establishing and in bringing together the different elements of this system; the provisions for maintenance now permanently fixed in the charter of the city; the devotion of official boards and private associations; and especially the enthusiasm for the University manifested by this convocation today—all prophecy a glorious success for this unique and epoch-making movement. Fellow citizens, for your country's sake, for the world's sake, as well as for her own sake, Cincinnati must not, can not, will not fail!

The task before us suggests the theme for the hour. I ask you to consider with me the man in the democracy, and his educational rights, duties, and destiny!

The moving spectacle of the centuries exhibits four institutions which make for civilization: the home, the school, the state, and the church. Wherever these agencies have been wanting in the world there has been no civilization; where they have been strongest and freest, there has been the highest civilization. One or more of these institutions has always played a leading part in the large achievements of the race. These agencies are closely linked together, and each reveals a phase of the social relations of man. The home discovers the child in relation to his parents and brethren; the school reveals the youth in relation to his teacher and fellow students; the state, the man in relation to his fellow citizens; and the church, the spirit of man in relation to the Father of spirits. Through the discipline of these relations man is educated.

The fundamental conception of education is growth and training. Development comes first by training and then by work. Man must grow and work, or else decay and die: he must be before he can do; he must get before he can give; he must become strong before he can serve. But he can only get his growth and enter into his full estate by the help of these agencies of his social environment. This process of education goes on continuously wherever we live and so long as we live. Growth and training are not limited to the home and the school. The wonderful fact is that we grow by giving and become strong by serving. Therefore, that form of state is best which gives man's social nature the fullest exercise. Of all governments democracy does this best.

The school is the institution whose special task it is to develop into fullness of being and doing the future citizens of the democracy. The church and state develop men incidentally in the course of their other functions. The school trains them by a definite plan and with a fixed purpose.

Let us first recall a few of the elementary principles of democracy. Governments exist for the protection and development of mankind. They exist not for the governors, not for a bureaucracy of their agents, not for the benefit of any class whatever, but solely for the benefit of all the people governed. We can not say of any form of government that it is best for all people under all circumstances. One form of government may be best for a set of people under certain conditions; another, for a set of people under different conditions. That government is preferable which most adequately protects the race and trains the powers of its people. No government is of divine right, but that government is divinest which best maintains justice, love, and mercy among men. Autocracy may have been best for a people in its childhood; aristocracy, for a people in its youth; but democracy is the best form of government for a people in its manhood. It is the best system we know to-day, not because it always affords the best

protection to individuals, for this it does not always do; but because it trains and educates men most generally and most effectively. Undoubtedly, democracy in its present form is far from perfect; but it certainly contains the essential truth in its fundamental teaching that government exists for man, and not man for government and in that still nobler teaching that we are all brethren, not because we are of one race or of one church, not because we are citizens of Cincinnati, or members of this republic, but because, whether Caucasian, African, or American Indian; whether Jewish, Protestant, or Catholic, we are all sons of one Father which is in Heaven.

But even the freedom and brotherhood of the democracy can not produce perfect equality of condition among all citizens. On the contrary, individual liberty in a free state must lead unavoidably to inequality of conditions and possessions. Variety is the law of nature. Where there is no variety there can be no selection. A high civilization implies infinite differentiation with freedom. Such differentiation is always followed by wide integration, or union of related elements, and then a new differentiation begins, and so on forever. Variety between men, between families, between communities, between churches, and between states, is thus an essential condition of growth and freedom.

While differences of condition in our present civilization are inevitable, in the democracy there is an ever increasing realization of man as a free being. In an autocracy like the Sublime Porte no one is free but the Sultan; in an aristocracy like ancient Athens, twenty thousand citizens were free, and four hundred thousand human beings were slaves; but in this republic of the Anglo-Saxon race all men have an equal chance to become free and, what is more important, all men possess an ever growing consciousness of freedom, and an ever increasing realization of brotherhood. This freedom is not license, the absence of law, but righteous self rule, the consciousness of oneself as the source of law. In

order that a man may have true freedom he must be educated.

“I, Freedom, dwell with knowledge ; I abide
With men by culture trained and fortified.
Conscience my sceptre is and law my sword.”

This ideal of democratic freedom is possible only where all the people are educated, for where they are ignorant, the attempted democracy soon reverts to an aristocracy or to an oligarchy. Because of the mass of ignorant blacks, there existed in the South before the Civil War an aristocracy ; because of great bodies of untrained foreigners, the governments of some of our large cities have at times been veritable oligarchies. Modern democracy, realizing the menace of ignorance to her very existence, has resolved that every child within her bounds, rich or poor, white or colored, shall have an opportunity to get all the education it can take. Nothing less than this will meet the requirements and fulfil the ideals of a government “of the people, by the people, and for the people.”

The first right of the man in the democracy then is to have a school. Education is the preparation of the fully developed free man for service in his environment. It first builds the all-round man, strong in all parts of his nature : mind, affections and will ; it then adjusts him to his physical, intellectual, emotional, and volitional environment. It is the duty of the democracy to train its citizens to vote intelligently and to work honestly, and therefore the modern state or city must provide public schools for its children.

Men have, indeed, a right to govern themselves, but without education, men have not the capacity. Suffrage is not a natural right, but a privilege assigned to those who qualify themselves for its proper exercise in accordance with a standard fixed by the state. All men, except abnormals, possess the capacity for education and when educated have the power to govern themselves and the right to take part in the government of others. Democracy means self-government ; self-

government necessitates universal education ; and universal education can only be accomplished by free public schools under the control of all the people.

Let us have done with these hackneyed arguments against the public school. Free public schools are not institutions of "paternalism." The city or the state does not establish schools as it does orphan asylums for children who have no parents. Who are the voters and tax-payers but the fathers, uncles, and brothers of the children? The school district or the city is merely their organization for educating their own children. The state requires them to do it and provides the machinery, but the people direct the schools and pay the bills. Local self-government of schools is one of the most important principles of democracy.

Let us also cast out of our minds all half-hearted arguments for the free education of all the people. It is true that it pays a community to educate all its youth ; but the public school is not a charity institution. School-houses and school-masters are cheaper than jails and soldiers ; but we do not build public schools for that reason. Such arguments for free schools are little less than an insult to a free people. Democracy is something nobler than a policeman guarding and protecting our property and our rights. The democracy establishes its public schools to train new citizens and to fit them for self-government, and when it shall have done its full duty in this respect there will be little need of policemen and soldiers. A democracy spending hundreds of millions for warships and forts, for armies and navies is enough to give devils joy. If we spent one fourth of this treasure in schools and missions, the whole world would soon be ours in bonds of love and there would be no need of these engines of death and destruction.

Education conserves and education advances. Education conserves all the good in the past of the race. It gathers up the fragments, so that the new man takes up the burden of progress which his fathers laid down with their lives: "Other men labored and ye have entered into their labors." It preserves the achievements

of man as the foundation on which to build the more stately mansions of the soul. How impossible then to neglect the school and the scholar as factors in the maintenance of civilization!

Education, is also the chief agent of human progress. The characteristic which distinguishes man from the lower animals is his power to advance himself independently of heredity and natural selection. This he does by working actively to mould his environment so as to make it more and more favorable to human life. He commenced his work by moulding nature, and has continued it by moulding mind. Man has improved plants, developed animals, conquered the earth and sea, acquired resources of a thousand kinds, chained and used the forces of nature, invented tools, established transportation and communication, and made the whole world of matter contribute to his welfare and progress. He builds homes, churches, schools, colleges, and universities, and makes all the intellectual, social, and religious forces contribute to the development of his mind. The growing mind of each generation conquers more of nature, and nature in turn feeds the mind. So nature and mind re-act the one upon the other, as they both build up the man. Civilization has its foundation in this moulding by man of his environment.

Now civilization, as the progressive realization of human nature, which is merely education writ large, employs five agencies: Science, language, art, religious institutions, and social and political institutions. Science, systematized knowledge, is the basis of all our thinking and doing; it is at once the fulcrum of all our work, and the lever of all our progress, without which we should have no control either of the processes of nature or of social life. New needs are constantly developing, which it is the province of science to supply. New materials are constantly called for, and science discovers them; new forces are required to do the world's work, and science promptly connects them with the great world-machine. The modern university,

which trains men to do these things, was the starting point of the present marvelous era of wealth-production and of social evolution. Language has two important functions in human progress: it makes possible permanent records and reasoning about our experience, and it also provides for the communication and distribution of our knowledge and experience. Art, including literature, sculpture, painting, and music, is a means of the expression of our ideals and feelings, and so liberates and elevates human experience. It is the part of our American education most sadly neglected. Social and political institutions, like the school and the state, preserve, transmit, and distribute all these possessions of society, while the church develops the spiritual nature of man. These great agencies—science, language, art, social and religious institutions—are all preserved and advanced through the colleges and the universities. Without the institutions of higher education, these agencies of civilization could not be maintained and strengthened, and the race would stand still and die.

Society constantly needs new leaders, and the college trains them. Progress in all departments of science, art, industry, and social institutions is in the hands of the man who knows. Ours is a day of experts. When we build a house, a factory, a bridge, or a railroad, we call in the man who has been especially trained for this work. In every field of industry, in all matters of health and sanitation, and even in charitable and religious work we confide more and more in the specialist. We need specialists also in municipal and state affairs. The modern city must provide institutions for the study of the sciences of human life and the arts of hygiene and medicine, and therefore needs sanitarians and physicians; it constructs and maintains public works, and so needs engineers and chemists; it conducts public finance and administers the business of the people, and so needs economists and administrators; and as education is the chief business of the people, one of the most important needs is, educational engineers, trained teachers and superintendents. No better illus-

tration of this utility of experts could possibly be presented to you than this company of eminent scholars, scientists, educators, publicists, engineers, physicians, who have honoured us with their presence to-day, each of whom is a specialist in some department of knowledge, and is constantly using this talent in the service of his country.

Since higher education produces more efficient men, and thus increases the productivity, the wealth, and the power of the nation, it is the duty of the state or city to provide, not only free schools, but colleges and universities for the higher training of its citizens. The university is at once the creature and the creator of the democracy; it is born of the people, and it lives for the people. It is the very brain and heart of progress, supplying it with both direction and food. It is at one and the same time the school, the workshop, the library, and the light-house of democracy. Every democratic state or city must have its university to supply direction for its people and to train their leaders, or it can never realize its glorious aims. Since the education of all the people is the basis of democratic progress, the problems of public education are the problems of the university. The first duty of the university is to train educational experts to develop the schools.

Our conception of the educational rights of man has grown with the conception of his nature and his destiny. If man is a soulless being, like the stocks and stones, or a mere animal, like the beasts of the field, whose life is limited to a few years, his education is, at best, the expedient of a day. But if man has an immortal spirit capable of limitless development, then is his education of infinite concern.

Our conception of education has grown both in content and in extent. We believe first in universality in education. No human being is an accident, a few molecules of matter or ions of force, but every one is a child of God created to do a definite work in the world. We believe that, as every child is a plan of God, capable of infinite development, so every child deserves to be

rightly trained for his work. There is no class, no aristocracy, in education; education is for all. This is the fundamental argument for universal education; this is the ground of our faith in democracy and in its ultimate success—that every human being has a right to a chance in life, because God made him, and made him to do something in the world.

Secondly, we believe in diversity in education—that education should include all subjects that fit men for better living and better serving. No department of knowledge belongs to any one class. The whole material world is for all men to study and to control; the whole intellectual world for all men to enter into and possess. As there are no classes in the democracy of men, so there are no classes in the republic of science. It is not a question of higher education for one class and lower education for another. There is no higher and lower education, as there is no primary and secondary education, except in the order of time. We make too much of these imaginary differences. Let us take a broader view and realize, once for all, that education is the complete training of all men to do all the work for which God made them.

Universality and diversity are thus the two fundamental principles of our educational theory. Each man has a right to a complete education in any department of knowledge; but complete education does not mean that all men must be educated in the same way. Diversity of gifts, talents, office, and service is the law of life. Completeness consists in the harmonious development of the powers of the individual man.

It is the duty of each man to develop to the fullest his own peculiar talents. As life and art grow more complex, society needs an increasingly diverse set of agents, and the ideal of democratic education should be to produce a cooperating population in which each individual has attained the maximum power and efficiency in the direction of his peculiar talents.

A nation of men and woman with all their powers completely trained would be like a grand orchestra of

many instruments, each instrument, large or small, soft or loud, giving its own melodious tone, and each tone blending into the perfect orchestral harmony. So the men and women of our race, trained to their highest and clearest expression, may blend the music of their lives with the eternal harmonies of God. No individual discord should mar the melody, no individual note should be lacking, for the lives and the service of all men are necessary to produce the grand symphony of the perfect democracy of the future.

What dare we say lastly of the destiny of man in the democracy?

What is the meaning of this education of all men in accordance with their God-given nature? Education is a world-process for the development of human beings. Nature and society are at work making us into the image of God. As inconceivable ages of organic evolution preceded the birth of the child, so inconceivable ages of educational work must succeed his birth before he becomes the perfect man. As it took all the creative energies to make this "heir of all the ages," so it will take all the resources of the family, school, church and state to fully develop this citizen of the Kingdom of Heaven.

To this end the world of nature and the world of society are perfectly adapted. Paulsen says that it is impossible to conceive a world better fitted than ours to educate man. What better school could be contrived for him than this wonderful world with its myriads of objects of interest and beauty, all shot through with light and vibrating with sound. All the world's a school, and all the men and women merely pupils.

What is true of the material world is also true of the social world. The experience of nations teaches that whatever morality declares to be good and just is found to preserve and advance individual as well as social life, while evil impedes and destroys it. Injustice and falsehood may triumph for a time but in the end right rules. Through suffering and death the truth passes to its resurrection.

Moreover, the truth does not always have to wait until the next world for its coronation. Right rules eventually in this world, as the history of nations in a thousand instances declares. We have a striking illustration before us to-day in the humiliation of Russia by Japan. The power that for ages has held its own people in bonds and persecuted the Jews and all other aliens, the dynasty that stole the Baltic provinces, murdered Poland, and seeks now to smother all the liberty and learning that lives in unhappy Finland, has found its judge and executioner at last in a little people whose virtues, exhibited in a devotion and patriotism never surpassed, are a splendid testimony to the power of righteousness to exalt a nation. Every believer in humankind, every lover of justice and truth, hails Japan to-day as a glorious example of what education can do for a people.

Education in this broad sense is the process whereby men and nations realize their destiny and reach the highest goal of power and service. What is that destiny and what that goal?

Upward evolution is the one method of all the vast periods of the past. The time spanned by human history, by the records of the rocks, or even by the wider history of the cosmos, is only a small chapter of eternity; but that chapter is written full of the great First Cause. The irreversible, ascending process of organic evolution of which we read there, is a lesson from the Infinite, a parable of the Truth. Now, if matter teaches us by these unwearying processes of evolution, by physical and biological laws, to expect only progress in the world of nature, how much more does mind encourage us by its unmeasured development through natural and educational agencies, to hope for perfection in the world of spirit. Mental, as well as physical evolution seeks a kingdom beyond our present horizon. They both declare that there must be a reality back of this vast creative work, a destiny ahead of this tremendous progressive force. Education is merely the course of evolution become conscious in man. It is a

part of the one vast process of making a Universe of worlds and a Heaven of spirits. The work begun in darkness and chaos, in world-mist and vaporous nebulae, in seething suns and cooling planets; the life born on land and in sea; in grass, herb, and fruit; in fish, fowl, and creeping things—all this unrolling matter and all this ascending life—has its culmination in man, its completion in his education.

Our experience of the development and education of man teaches us that "in this world there is nothing great but man; in man there is nothing great but mind." How else can we explain the upward development of unrealized mind which education reveals except on the theory that behind the whole process and giving it power at every stage is the one Infinite Mind? In the whole universe there is nothing great but mind! The world's a school, and the Infinite Mind imminent therein is the Great Teacher!

The education of man is never complete. The formative physical and social influences bearing upon him are never ceasing—they tug at him as long as he lives. His environment is never exhausted, and therefore he never has all the education he can take. There is always more to learn, to love, to do. Our ideals flee from us as we pursue them. Truth, beauty, and goodness are infinite and eternal, and are waiting to be known, loved, and realized by the intellect and heart of man. They are the objects of his ceaseless study, the encouragement of his tireless strivings, and the goal of his endless development. Because he loves truth and beauty, and pursues ideals, and hopes so universally and unceasingly, we must believe in his continuous progress. The process of education proves that man is capable of infinite development. This is a basis of our hope of immortality.

But why is man immortal? To what end has he an undying mind, capable of infinite development? Service, we found, is the ultimate end of education. As it has been in time, so we believe it will be in eternity. As we are being educated for service here, so we shall be

educated for a higher service in the hereafter. As service is the purpose of our education, so also it is the means of our future training; we are trained for service, and we are trained by service. We are told that a violin tuned by a master grows ever richer and sweeter with the years. A Stradivarius, three hundred years old, played for years by a Paganini holds his spirit, they tell us, as well as that of its maker in every plate and fibre, ready to breath it forth again in music at the touch of a master. So God makes us every one after his own fashion, and by playing upon us through the years, tunes us and fills us with His Spirit, and so prepares us to praise Him in an unending life of service. Service is the end of all education, service is the end of immortality. Does philosophy give us thus a hint of our destiny? Behold, O ye struggling, suffering men and women of this world the vision it gives us of the future!

A vast multitude praising their Maker and Teacher, each upon his own instrument, in accordance with his own nature—a complete brotherhood of perfect spirits—such was the dream of King David when he sang of a people praising their God “with the sound of the trumpet,” “with the psaltery and harp,” “with stringed instruments and organs,” and “upon the high sounding cymbals.” And such again was the vision of Saint John, when he saw the New Jerusalem and “heard a voice from heaven as the voice of many waters and as the voice of a great thunder,” and “as the voice of harpers harping with their harps,” and “they sang as it were a new song before the throne” “and no man could learn the song save they that had been redeemed out of the earth.” Only those taught of God in this world will sing the new song before the throne!

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